The General Staff System

From the Springfield Republican.

With the retirement of Gen. Miles, August 8, the general staff of the army will begin its career. Much work has been done in organizing the staff, and it will start out with all the conditions in its favor. The secretary of war regards this new device as his own creation, and therefore he is deeply interested in its permanent success. Theoretically the country is now to have the finest military administrative machine in its history, and when war happens to come, no matter in what quarter, the chief of staff will simply go to a certain pigeon-hole, as Moltke did at the outbreak of the war with France, and take down the solution of the problem, worked out in its minutest details.

That the new arrangement, in its improved systematization and coordination of various functions of the army, will increase the efficiency of the United States in war, particularly in the first weeks of hostilities, is practically certain. What is not so sure is the final elimination of friction between the professional soldier highest in rank or command and the civilian head of the war department. Mr. Root in urging the creation of a general staff, has made a strong point of the historic feuds that have raged since the days of Gen. Scott between the general commanding the army and the secretary of war. Substitute a general staff for the general "commanding the army," he has argued, and those feuds will be no more. Whether this expectation is to be fully realized experience will determine. The real test of the chief of staff, in his relations to the secretary of war, must come after Mr. Root has left the department, and the procession of lawyers or business men, for the most part unfamiliar with military affairs, is continued in the office of war secretary.

The civilian head of the department, as the personal representative of the constitutional commander-in-chief, must never cease to be supreme in authority over any army officer, whatever his rank or position; yet, unless human nature changes radically, the professional soldier at the very topmost pinnacle of his calling, is not always sure to respect the judgment or the knowledge of a civilian chief. Whether the soldier be called chief of staff or general commanding the army, a possible contempt for or jealousy of civilian supervision, on his part, must be reckoned as a factor of the situation.

Whether any other great power has worked out this question along the lines necessarily set for the United States is doubtful. The British military establishment has been having the same troubles, at times, between the general in command and the civilian secretary of war; and nothing has been done to change the organization since Gen. Lord Wolseley's grumpy retirement. In European countries the head of the war department who sits in the cabinet is almost always a soldier by profession, although he may be retired from active service. This is the fact in France, which is a republic with a large army directed by a general staff. Such an arrangement doubtless tends to prevent trouble of the sort that has vexed the governments of England and the United States in years past; and this view is confirmed to some extent by the friction which at once developed between the French naval officers of high rank and the present minister of marine—for M. Pelletan is a journalist rather than a naval officer by profession.

If, after ten years, the American experience with the general staff shows an entire absence of the old-fashioned quarrels between professional and civilian in the administration of the army, then the complete success of the scheme in realizing all the hopes of its advocates will be established. Yet failure to eliminate entirely this kind of friction—which may be an inseparable accompaniment of our constitutional system—would not condemn the general staff as a whole.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

A New View of the Workings of the Trusts as Effecting the Employment of Men of Capacity.

Mr. Dill is one of the leading corporation attorneys of this country of the University of Minnesota, his subject being "Outlook for the College Graduate in America." He declared that the trust movement, instead of restricting the field for educated men and women, opened for them new opportunities for usefulness.

"The corporation movement," he said, "instead of crowding men out, has opened for them new fields of usefulness and has increased the financial returns for intelligent concentrated effort. It has, to a large extent, eliminated the prestige of rich men's sons and ended the career of the 'Miss Nancy' type. From motives of self-interest alone no coropration can recognize the 'pull basis' of making appointments.

"When the trust movement shall have steadied itself, when it shall have eradicated wrong tendencies and strengthened those elements which are right, then of the men in charge of great combinations will be required not only an intimate knowledge of the business itself, but the training to be derived from a university course.

"Such combinations never had an excuse for existing, nor a chance of success, except as it was possible to suppress trade in a way thoroughly repugnant to American principles. A certain class also of the labor element is tending toward the suppression of production. Certain promoters, self-styled financiers, and certain labor leaders, have each made the same mistake—that of attempting, while only a minority, to extract for themselves more than their proportion of the prosperity of the country by the suppression of the output of others, rather than by an increase of the results of their own labor."

Dr. Dill is one of the leading lcorporation attorneys of this country. He is reputed to have received a million-dollar fee for his services in settling the quarrel between Carnegie and Frick, and in organizing the new steel combine. Dill is counsel for more banks and trust companies than any other lawyer in New York. Dill graduated from Yale in '76 and supported himself while studying law by reporting for a New York newspaper.

HE OUGHT TO BE CAREFUL.

Mr. Carnegie is such a generous body that we need not be overcynical as to how he made his money, but when he declaimed at London yesterday against "this alarming race among men divided into hostile nations for increased weapons of destruction," he came perilously near alluding to the millions which he himself has made from the steel purchased, at a very high price, for American war vessels.—Providence Journal.

BAD NEWS FOR BREWERIES.

Along with the usual spring reports of the failure of various crops comes one from the distant Washington hop yards. Frosts have nipped the young vines, and the season has been unusually late, so that it is now predicted that the harvest will be at least 20 per cent smaller than usual.

ASIATIC WAR IS CERTAIN.

The navy's idea of the destiny of man was expressed by Rear-Admiral Luce at the opening of the naval war college the other day. "Any future problems in the destiny of man," said he, "will be worked out through the instrumentality of the sword. There is no escaping it." This is the conviction at the bottom of Admiral "Bob" Evan's soul when he manifests his regret at coming home from China. Admiral Evans is confident that there will be another scrap over there in a short time. And he would much like to be in it.—Springfield Republican.